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THE CRAYON.

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY, 1859.

Sketchings.

THE CENTURY FESTIVAL.

Amongst the pleasant anniversaries which a new year brings with it, comes the ever welcome Century festival. This event, so interesting to loyal centurians, took place, as usual, on Twelfth-Night; sixth of January, which this year fell upon Thursday evening. It was attended with all the ceremonies peculiar to this festival, one of which is the ceremony of electing a queen; it being common to both May-day and Twelfth-Night, and one that throws a brighter veil of poetry over these holidays than characterizes any other days on the festive calendar. It is unnecessary to recapitulate the attractions of the Century rooms; the elegant saloon and charming ladies' boudoir were as beautiful and impressive as the year before; nor is it incumbent on us to state that an immense crowd of fair ladies in tasteful and rich costume, imparted more life and brilliancy to the saloon than black coats do in a business or convivial meeting. Several smaller rooms were thrown open, and used as dressing rooms, conversation rooms, etc. We cannot avoid noticing, however, out of our sensitiveness for pictorial features, that one of the most beautiful, as well as peculiar effects of this brilliant assemblage, was to be seen in its perfection only by those loyal subjects and guests who gathered in the great room at an early hour, or who lingered in or around the dance after the midnight hour had somewhat thinned the apartments. It is most happily described by a writer in a contemporary journal (*The Home Journal*), with the feeling and judgment of one alike skilled in female beauty and in the magic effects of light and color. In his words: "While the grand saloon was filling, the effect was marvellously beautiful—the elegant dresses of the fashion and beauty of the city telling with great value and relief against the crimson background. Single figures and combined groups—the sharp *intaglio* of a fine profile—the luminous brilliancy of full shoulders, or rounded arms—the varied and picturesquely-becoming head-dresses, having a detached and picture-like impressiveness, which a room of such size and hangings can alone give."

All this is true, and "yet scarce half the truth is told." But we must proceed. Before glancing at the order of proceedings, we have to state that the lower story of the club edifice was less elaborately decorated than the year before; festoons, garlands, and variegated rosettes, intermingled with evergreens, were appended to walls, ceilings, cornices, and staircases, producing, if not so imposing an effect as middle-age trappings, yet a social and cheerful aspect. Conspicuous among these was an immense "salve" in the hall facing the entrance, assuring the fair guests as they arrived that they were most cordially welcome.

The company assembled at half-past eight, and at ten o'clock the cake was cut, and passed round, one fair lady finding (by chance, undoubtedly) an emblem of eternal sovereignty—a ring—in one of the pieces of cake, and she was accordingly discovered, and announced as Queen. Some spiritual and, we think, jealous descendant of the Eastern Magi must have presided over the revels, for one of the wisest of the wise men of the club, its president, was elected as the Queen's consort; our

republican candor constrains us to say that the title of King, allowed him openly by courtesy, was traitorously coveted by some of his junior peers. We must here, by the way, mention one peculiarity of the etiquette of the Centurial Court, variant from ordinary usage, though we do not at all doubt that it is founded on the highest authority, and was adopted after profound research and grave deliberation. It is this. Her Majesty the Queen is regarded as the reigning sovereign, and receives the homage of her subjects, whilst His Majesty has only the place and honor of a King Consort, and announces and bears himself as "Her Majesty's highest and most devoted subject." The election over, and the ring having been placed on Her Majesty's finger, the Queen and King were invested with the regal insignia. A tastefully designed cap, after the fashion of that of the Doge of Venice, made of ermine and crimson velvet, surmounted by a golden orb, was set upon His Majesty's head; a red cordon was passed over his neck, and a golden sceptre was placed in his hand. The Queen was crowned with a crimson cap, *à la grecque*, and a classic gold coronet-wreath, while the grand cross of the order of the Century attached to a blue cordon, was suspended over her shoulder. After the robing ceremonies were completed, acclamations burst forth, and the assembly of loyal and enthusiastic subjects chanted, as if in one voice, the following anthem:

QUEEN'S ANTHEM.

Hail to our gracious queen,
Well hath she chosen been,
Hail gracious queen.

Freely we own thy sway,
Humbly our homage pay,
Gladly we all obey,
Hail gracious queen.

Honor the newly crowned,
Raise high the festive sound,
Hail gracious queen.

Here on this festive night,
Gathered to grace our rite,
Subjects we all unite,
Hail gracious queen.

Earth knows no queen like ours,
Strew, then, her path with flowers,
Hail gracious queen.

Here on our bended knee,
Homage we pay to thee,
Queen of the Century,
Hail gracious queen.

Ushers of the golden rod then approached, and presented distinguished guests, among them the ladies of our national representatives at the courts of Spain and Austria, including a number of representatives of the home court of Beauty; the whole of the court present then made a circuit before their majesties, being rapidly introduced as they passed. The presentations being over, the King and Queen arose, and, to the sound of music, led the way to the banquetting rooms below, followed by their subjects, and preceded by two high officers of state, holding golden rods, and walking backward, facing their majesties, down the grand staircase; their majesties took seats on chairs of state placed upon a dais erected behind the rich and luxuriantly spread table, upon which the customary board's head was not forgotten. The scene that followed baffles description. No baronial hall on Christmas day, or Greek

symposium could present a more animated picture. None but a combatant in the thickest of the fight could do justice to the gallantry of the cavaliers, who so eagerly pressed forward to do service for the ladies. As soon as—to use the Homeric phrase as rendered by Pope—"the rage of hunger was appeased," the King, commanding silence in the court, reminded the assemblage that, according to immemorial usage, it was their duty to offer their congratulations to the new Queen in the form of a toast, and this duty, as her majesty's first and most devoted subject, it was his proud office to discharge by proposing "The Health of the Queen."

To this toast, Mr. P. A. Porter replied, honored by Her Majesty's commands:

As a loyal subject, standing by chance near the throne, I have been honored by her majesty's commands. I am instructed to thank the assembly for the enthusiasm just manifested. Her majesty is aware that it is not usual for crowned heads to acknowledge the applause of their subjects by more than a faint smile of approval; but her majesty desires to begin her reign by an act of great condescension, and, moreover, she recognizes around her a roomful of sovereigns. If the loyal subjects of this realm expect an inaugural address from their gracious queen, they are doomed to disappointment. Inaugurals are plenty—they are also dangerous. Gratitude, her majesty knows, has been defined to be a lively sense of benefits to come. Let a grateful people look forward, therefore, to a long future of possible favor. Some sovereigns have reigned, but have not governed; some have governed, but have not reigned (long). It is hoped that the present government will be a judicious mixture of the two sorts of rule; and, that her majesty's subjects on the next new year—unlike her majesty's subjects on the last new year—will regret that the reign (rain) is over. The future of all political authority, however, is uncertain; but I dare to exceed my instructions, and to predict that there is one authority and one empire which will suffer nothing in her majesty's hands—an empire that depends on neither chance nor choice—older than kingdoms or republics—that began in Eden, and is to end with the last man and the empire of her sex.

Her majesty commanded me to be brief. I obey with reluctance; but I am instructed by the queen to present for the acclaim of all loyal subjects, the exalted personage who sits beside her—who is alike king of Twelfth-Night and President of our little republic,—a royal president and a presiding king, who derives one set of powers from the cake, and another from the constitution. Out of respect to that constitution and to that great republic, which overshadow both our little kingdom and our little republic, I give as the next name to be honored—"The President."

To this toast, which was enthusiastically received, His Majesty was graciously pleased to respond in person. But before commencing his speech he respectfully submitted to Her Majesty the Queen the propriety of conferring some high dignity upon the last orator, to which Her Majesty graciously assenting, the honors of a peerage were conferred in due form.

The king then observed, that by "the President," on this occasion, but one individual could be meant. However many might bear that title, whether in a political, financial, or literary rule, here the title could have no other in view than the President of the Century. Having known that high functionary longer than any one else, knowing him better than any one could, even as "his other self," he was bound to pronounce his eulogy. He then proceeded to recapitulate the merits and glories of the President's gentle government, equalling in quiet, in good nature, and in good fellowship Béranger's good King of Yvetôt, whilst he far surpassed even that classic monarch in the glories of his administration. Under his sway the arts had flourished, and the walls of hundreds of halls and saloons throughout the land glowed

with the living genius of the artists of the Century; whilst on all sides noble churches, palatial residences, and commercial edifices of more than palatial magnificence, had arisen—rapid and lofty as the mountain mists, firm and solid as the mountains themselves—from the constructive skill of our architects. Letters had been fostered, and the varied talent of the members of this intellectual State poured forth in every form, from the light song or gay satire to the massy Cyclopaedia. The "Century" had been recognized among the powers of the earth in the Literary Congress at Brussels, in the person of its gifted ambassador. But it was the peculiar happiness of the distinguished personage whose health had been so cordially received now to reign by a double right. It was the special praise of the greatest of the Bourbons, Henry IV., that he reigned by a double right, "by the right of conquest and the right of birth." So the President of the Century now reigned over a loyal and loving people by the double right of popular election and the divine right of Twelfth-Night choice by the mysterious cake and ring. His majesty said that he could acknowledge but one contemporary sovereign having a similar title. This was his imperial brother the Emperor and former President of France. He then expressed a fervent wish that his brother President Buchanan might resemble himself in happy fortune, and not only pass quietly to regal honors, but have the higher happiness of receiving with them a queen, as young, as brilliant, and as beautiful as her who now shared the Centennial throne. His majesty then entered on a glowing though rapid view of the future fortunes of civilization under such a triple presidential royal reign. Then he said, the imperial Eagle of France would, from her Alpine perch, overshadow Italy and the Mediterranean with one wing, and bathe the pinions of the other in the wild and stormy North Sea. Then the American Eagle, hovering over the Rocky Mountains, would stretch her wide plumage from the Pacific to the Gulf of Mexico, whilst far above all, the Centennial Eagle, grasping the palmet of art in one talon, and wielding the thunderbolt of the press in the other, would soar in the very highest heaven of invention.

Here His Majesty, overpowered with the magnitude and magnificence of these conceptions, paused, and then added:

It will take these three eagles a longer time than we can now spare to wait for them to descend to the earth again from their airy height, and we have other duties to discharge. There need not be any apprehension on their account. Our eagles are exceedingly well trained and in constant practice, and will come down from their rhetorical flight very safely, and quite in time for the use of the various orators here and elsewhere who have engaged their services.

His Majesty then graciously concluded by a cordial welcome to the fair guests of the evening, wishing them long years of continued health, happiness, and beauty. Then, receiving from the chief butler, the Hon. Mr. Sparrowgrass, the ancient massive Gov. Stuyvesant two-handled silver goblet, he requested the whole court to join in the health of "Our Fair Guests," which was drank with great applause.

To this toast Mr. W. O. Bryant responded. He said:

May it please the King, and above all, may it please the Queen. I hope it will not be regarded as a departure from strict propriety if a poet should respond to the toast just given. In all ages, from the time of Homer to this day, it is the writers of verse who have been foremost in celebrating the praise of woman. Who wrote the *Mérite des Femmes*? A poet, of course. Inasmuch, therefore, as this is one of the cases in which it does not seem to be expected that any representative of that eloquent sex will stand forth to address the assembly, I will venture to say a word or two.

I am aware that there are many of that sex, in honor of which this toast has been proposed, who regard associations like ours as hostile to their own just and proper influence. They look upon all clubs as not only selfish and exclusive, but as absolutely seditious—as so many

centres of rebellion against the mildest, most beneficent, happiest and best government of which the mind can conceive—as monastic in the worst sense—combinations of men held together by the love of eating, drinking, and smoking, and contempt for the women. I beg leave to ask if there is anything in the proceedings of this evening which gives a shadow of countenance to this opinion? Of all clubs of which I have any knowledge, the Century has distinguished itself by instituting periodical and frequent festivities for the ladies' sake. Everything we see about us this evening, all the preparations for this brilliant festivity, this banquet, the music, the decorations of these halls are so many propitiatory offerings laid at the feet of woman—so many expressive and, I hope, persuasive salutations to a league of perpetual amity. When these apartments were designed and built, what idea was uppermost in the minds of those who directed the architect? It was so to construct them as best to minister to the convenience and pleasure of those who now grace the floor as our guests.

It is related in ancient history—you will find the record in an old-fashioned book called the Spectator, which was much in the hands of our grandmothers, and which I believe has been seen by some ladies of the present generation whose tastes are decidedly antiquarian—that long ago, in a distant country, a tribe of Amazons were at war with a large army of the other sex who had encamped against them. The exigencies of the warfare, by some means, led to a truce. I am sorry that I cannot be more particular—that I cannot state the occasion and terms of the truce, nor the era and scene of these events; they are important points in history, and worthy of a careful investigation; but not being able to consult the very scarce work I have named, I must pass them over.

The history proceeds to relate, that to while away the dull hours of the truce, the contending parties paid each other occasional visits in their respective encampments. At these times the men, to divert their new acquaintances, made a rude music by clashing their swords against their bucklers, keeping regular time, and the women, not to be outdone, took their lighter weapons, their long slender arrows, and pattered on their empty helmets, which they had taken off to let their long locks flow down loose upon their shoulders. The younger of both sexes capered with delight to these sounds, until at length their leaps and other movements grew into regular dances, such as we shall have to-night, after this refectio is over. At length the parties made themselves so agreeable to each other, that when the truce had expired, they could not find it in their hearts to renew the war. The truce was prolonged, and finally grew into a solid, unbroken, perpetual peace; the two tribes became blended into one, and formed a prosperous, peaceful, and highly civilized nation.

So may it perhaps be with the Century. The imperfect civilization in which it had its origin may, through the gentle influence of woman, pass into a stage of higher refinement. Ours is a barbarian institution, we acknowledge, but it may prove a transition to something better. If our gracious queen and her illustrious maids of honor, and the bright company of matrons and damsels who compose her court, have done us the honor to look at the programme of the evening, they have seen that for to-night there is to be no smoking in any part of the house. Let them well weigh the magnitude of the sacrifice which has been made for their sake—the “luxury of a tenth cigar” voluntarily and freely abandoned. From such a beginning what may we not hope for the future. The time may arrive, sooner perhaps than any who are here now expect, when, at some happy epoch, to be denominated in history the era of the feminine invasion, those who are now our visitors shall become the joint possessors of these apartments, and if joint possessors, they are sure to bear absolute sway; when our excellent and honored president, now our king, and the finest scholar that ever wore a crown, having voluntarily divested himself of his authority, our fair queen, with due pomp and ceremony, and with demonstrations of rejoicing that shall shake this building from the roof to the foundation-stones, shall be installed as the lady president of the

century, and smoking be banished, not for a single night, but forever.

And now, with the leave of our august monarch, the benefits, and bounties, and benignities of whose reign we all heartily acknowledge; and with the leave also of the royal partner of his throne, to whom our obligations are no less profound, and towards whom our loyalty, I trust, is even more enthusiastic, I take the liberty of directing the attention of the company to another subject by proposing this toast—

“The King of the Dutch, the firm and faithful ally of our gracious Queen.”

Whether on principles of consanguinity or of nomenclature, or, as there is reason to believe, of actual delegation from the crown of Holland, we are unable to say, but Mr. Edgar S. Van Winkle replied to this toast:

May it please your majesties: Whether his majesty, the King of the Dutch, recognizes me as his minister plenipotentiary or no, I have no doubt he will consider me as a very extraordinary ambassador. The honor you have intended to my royal master by including him as one of the principalities and powers remembered on this occasion, namely, your own royal selves, the fair sex, and the King of the Dutch, will be to him an *unheard of* gratification. Personally, I also feel proud and yet abashed at being an orator on this great event, and permitted to speak after you have listened to the echoes of the thunders of the falling ocean of Niagara, and to the master of the music of that harp, whose sighing strains and triumphant tones have become a national possession and a national pride. The compliment you have paid my sovereign will be peculiarly agreeable to him, coming from such an ancient and honorable source.

As my diplomatic labors, since my sojourn at your majesties' court, have not been extremely arduous, I have beguiled my leisure by ransacking the archives of that stupendous monument of literature, the Century library. Fortunate in a McMullen, it needs not a Magliabachi or a Cugswell—they would be but supernumeraries in that unparalleled collection. The prosecution of my studies has convinced me that, with the exception of the imperial family of China, your majesties' lineal predecessors extend back beyond the point that any of the royal lines in Europe or Asia can reach. Your royal majesty has established that fact in your elaborate history of Twelfth-Night, in which, scorning the arts of vulgar historians, whose petty and pretty ambition seems to be to invest truth with the garb of fiction, your majesty, rising to a loftier height, has draped the naked outlines of a beautiful fiction with the roinance of a more beautiful truth. May I venture to say, that, coming from some sources, truth is stranger than fiction.

Your majesties' court also is composed of gentlemen and ladies that, for aught I know to the contrary, may claim even a pre-Adamite origin. The ladies are famous for their beauty, wit, and accomplishments, not only throughout the world, but even throughout the universe of New York; so famous, indeed, that no rational belief can ascribe their origin to any other than a celestial source. They have undoubtedly descended from heaven, but how far I cannot tell. As to the gentlemen of your court I can only say, that if they are descended from Adam, Adam could not have been the man he is usually taken to have been.

I feel great pleasure in standing in this august presence, and witnessing the prosperity of your majesties' kingdom. Divine right and popular election have, as your majesty the king has said, concurred in your elevation. I say nothing of chance having caused the morsels of cake containing the rings to fall to your majesties' possession, for I have no doubt if the walls of an adjoining committee-room had tongues, as they have ears, we would be told that, as some philosophers affirm, the doctrine of chances can be reduced to a science and a certainty.

But to recur, I cannot look upon her majesty the queen without acknowledging the divine right which the Creator has bestowed on his

handiwork to reign over us all—her merit is *sterling*, for she was a *sovereign* before she possessed a *crown*. As to your majesty the king, I cannot say the same thing, for it would be an unmeaning repetition; your majesty's claim, moreover, not resting on beauty alone, but on what is in your opinion, and in that of my master, a higher distinction, namely, a current of genuine Batavian blood coursing through your veins.

My master will feel proud that his nation, famous for its statesmen, its scholars, and its artists, has furnished a king of Twelfth Night, who is in one a statesman and a scholar, and possesses that appreciative admiration of Art which is so necessary to the life of Art itself. May the Century prove more grateful for this gift than your majesties' barbarian neighbors east of the Byram River have proved to be for the inestimable gifts of town meetings, common schools, and thanksgiving days, which Holland so freely bestowed upon them.

But I am growing grave, and fear any constitutional seriousness may mar the general hilarity. I therefore conclude, by wishing to your majesties long life and prosperity, by hoping that the many estimable qualities of your male subjects, which are unknown either to themselves or others, may in due time be brought to light, and astonish the world, and the charms of your ladies, unsurpassed and unsurpassable as they are, may continue to increase, if that be possible, may bloom and blossom in luxuriant beauty, may be enduring and perennial, and extend their bright influence far beyond *this Century*.

But little more remains to be added. Absorbed as we were in listening to the eloquence just reported, we could not be present in the salon above, where our able knight of the quill previously quoted seems to have retreated; he says, "To divide the interest, and give more room while the graver ones were listening to eloquent adulation, the younger members were assiduously courting Terpsichore in the grand salon, where the twinkling feet braided footsteps till the witching hours were fled far away." Yielding to his observation for a report of the ceremonies in honor of Terpsichore, we add to our account of the joyous festivity a list of the works of Art displayed upon the walls, and contributed for the occasion, in addition to those belonging to the club. There were "Sunset in South America," by Mignot; "Twelfth Night," by Lang; a fine copy of an *Ostade*, by Chapman; "Moonlight," by Gignoux; "The Wadsworth Oak, Genesee Valley," by Kensett; "Normandy Coast Scene," by Dana; "The Sacred Lesson," by Huntington; "Birds and Dogs," by Hays; "Joan of Arc," "Roman Girl," "Sibyl," and "Nydia," by Lang; "Nurse and Child," by Leutze; "Sketching Flowers," an ideal, by Huntington; "Children's heads," and a cabinet picture, by Rossiter; "An Evening Scene," by Syudam; "Governor Peter Stuyvesant," and "Governor John Winthrop," the representatives of our mixed race, the one as the most distinguished of the Dutch governors, and the other of the first English colonial governors; "Dr. Kane," by Hicks; and two landscapes by Kensett. In the Ladies' Boudoir were "Bashish Fall," by Kensett; "Quail chickens," by Tait, and other small pieces.

We must not close our report of this bright festival without informing our readers, that for much of the brilliancy and effective decoration of the apartments, the guests were indebted to the practised and artistic eyes and voluntary labors of three or four artist members; while the banquet-rooms, etc., bore equal evidence to the science and taste of the sub-committee, under whose direction it was prepared, consisting of two gentlemen skilled alike in learning and the luxury of the table.

The Century Club may now be fully congratulated on the perfect success of their spirited endeavor, begun in 1856, to revive in this over-worked and care-worn city, "the love and

honor (as the official report of last year's centennial Twelfth-Night expressed it) due to this joyous ancient festival, with its poetical and reverential associations and its picturesque and pleasant usages, which had for ages annually contributed to the innocent enjoyment and social affections of the mixed ancestry of cosmopolitan New York."

DOMESTIC ART GOSSIP.

WASHINGTON.—The exhibition of the Washington Art Association, lately opened, contains about two hundred paintings, being the fullest and best representation of American Art this city has yet been favored with. The National Art Convention have held meetings, have enjoyed the hospitalities of the city, and have adjourned to meet again next January. We hope to present our readers in our next number with a detail of proceedings. The best feeling prevailed, and much general good was accomplished, especially that of enlightening members of Congress upon the Art resources of the country. No steps have hitherto been taken in behalf of the cause of art, so well calculated to make our public familiar with it, and with artists as a class of men that have a place in the body politic, and their right to be considered in all public acts that relate to their profession.

Since penning the above, we have received the following from a valued correspondent:

"The convention, although not numerously attended, was very strong in the character of the delegates, embracing some of our most prominent names in the various cities of the Union. Many matters of great interest to artists were brought forward for discussion, and an amiable and fraternal feeling engendered, which will, doubtless, result advantageously to the interests of Art throughout the United States. The attention bestowed upon the delegates by the citizens of Washington was not the least pleasant part of the convention, the Arts being spoken about as an element of national greatness, and the artists themselves acknowledged as worthy of attention. Although the convention resolved to meet again next year at the same place, I am confident that when the proper time arrives for coming together in other cities, much good may result to the interests of Art, by directing public attention to the subject. The exhibition of American Art by the Washington Art Association is perfectly magnificent,—decidedly, in my opinion, the best exhibition of American works, which it has been my privilege to see in this country. The number of exhibitors is very large, and embraces the first names in the Art-list of the country; and what is rather remarkable is the fact that figure-pictures predominate considerably over landscape. I trust that the citizens of Washington, as well as the members of our national Congress, will appreciate the collection, and visit it as frequently as possible. It has been declared in that city that there was no such thing as American Art—let the walls of that exhibition-room give the answer. I wish that some of our croakers could also be spectators; we would hear less of investments in European pictures."

The object of the convention, and the reasons why it should attract the sympathy of the public, are clearly set forth in the following memorial:

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States:

The Memorial of the Artists of the United States, in convention assembled, respectfully represents:

That your memorialists appear before your Honorable bodies, to solicit for American Art that consideration and encouragement to which they conceive it to be entitled at the hands of the general government.

They cannot but deem it a matter of deep regret that so important an element of national progress should have received as yet so limited a share of attention at the hands of our legislators, and that opportunities for the illustration of our country's history, rich as it is in material for the pencil and the chisel, should have been, with a few exceptions, denied to those whose province it is, and whose pride it would be, to embody in enduring and beautiful forms, for the benefit of our own and future generations, all that is glorious and ennobling in our history, character, and life, as a people.

Your memorialists submit that the time is now at hand when we may assume a position in the world of Art as enviable and exalted as that which we have attained in our social and political relations; that the capacity of our Artists to accomplish this glorious end is abundant, and that the appropriate field for its development and exercise is in the adornment and completion of the noble structures now being reared by the nation for the nation's use.

A liberal, systematic, and enlightened encouragement is, they believe, all that is needed for the establishment of a National Art that shall worthily illustrate the genius of our institutions, and they cherish the earnest hope that the golden opportunity now afforded, in the erection of spacious and costly buildings, will not be neglected, but that, by the wisdom of the means adopted by your Honorable bodies, an impulse may be given to the cause of American Art, the beneficent and ennobling influences of which shall extend to our remotest posterity.

Your memorialists respectfully urge, that the great end proposed, viz.: "The advancement of Art in the United States," may be most surely and completely attained by the establishment of an Art Commission, composed of those designated by the united voice of American Artists as competent to the office, who shall be accepted as the exponents of the authority and influence of American Art, who shall be the channels for the distribution of all appropriations to be made by Congress for Art purposes, and who shall secure to Artists an intelligent and unbiased adjudication upon the designs they may present for the embellishment of the national buildings.

Your memorialists believe that the appointment of such a commission would be hailed throughout the country as an evidence of a just and generous appreciation by your Honorable bodies of the claims and interests of Art, and would secure for it a future commensurate with the exalted character of the history and the times which it is its purpose to commemorate.

RANNEY COLLECTION.—The net proceeds of the sale of pictures for the benefit of Mrs. Ranney and children amounted to \$7,187 86 clear of all expenses; of this amount \$5,350 were realized from pictures contributed by ninety-five artists, and \$1,787 86 from those belonging to the Ranney estate. With the proceeds, the committee have discharged the indebtedness of Mr. Ranney's estate, safely investing the balance for the benefit of his family. The success of this affair more than realized anticipation, and it is chiefly due to N. B. Collins, Esq., whose good judgment and executive force have been conspicuous throughout. Among other effective co-laborers were the Hon. James T. Brady, the proceeds of whose lecture in behalf of the fund, relieved the committee of all fear of extra expense, and Messrs. H. H. Leeds & Co., auctioneers, who gave their services gratuitously, to say nothing of the body of artists generally who responded so liberally to this charitable demand upon them. There was another worthy co-laborer. A gentleman ascertained, previous to the sale, what was the actual value of certain pictures he was willing to buy—the prices that would be charged by the artists of the pictures if they were obtained directly of them—and he authorized an agent to "bid double." To this circumstance is due the spirit and animation of the sale, and it will account for the unprecedented high prices obtained.

ST. LOUIS.—A correspondent says: "On the evening of Dec. 21, 1858, the artists of our city were quietly brought together at the studio of Mr. Boyle to discuss the propriety of starting an academy of the fine arts, and the result was the immediate appointment of a committee to draw up a constitution. At the second meeting the same was adopted, and steps were directed to be taken to obtain a charter from the State of Missouri. The warmest kind of feeling prevailed, and every one felt that the good work had commenced. The constitution is based on the most liberal principles, and cannot but give entire satisfaction to those at all interested in Art. Operations are to be commenced next winter, with Primary, Antique, and Life schools. Mere mention of the step taken brought voluntary subscriptions of \$1,500 from a few friends of Art. Hopes of raising \$20,000 to \$25,000 are entertained. A sketch-club is agitated. All the portrait-painters here are doing well."

VERMONT.—A figure in wood, called Vermont (once before alluded to in our pages) has lately been erected on the dome of the State-house at Montpelier. The sculptor—for the statue is a work of Art, and not a carving—is Larkin G. Mead, jun., of Brattleborough. Over 3,000 feet of timber, ingeniously glued together, were used in forming the block, out of which Mr. Mead cut the statue. The statue is gilded, and placed on the dome, at an elevation of 160 feet from the ground. The design consists of a female in flowing drapery, holding the scroll or laws in her right hand, and in her left a sheaf of grain. The cost of the statue is \$800. Creditable as it is to the State in thus commissioning one of its own sons to execute this work, it would have been more so if the same money had been appropriated for a statue less loftily perched. It is bad taste to elevate a statue or any other work of Art, either in doors or out of doors, so far above the eye as to prevent its details from being seen and understood. A symbol which is completely intelligible by its outline, an object that has *shape* only—a cross for instance—may go anywhere within the compass of vision; but *form* should be where its subtle and expressive details can be appreciated. Another instance of error in this respect is the proposed elevation of Crawford's bronze statue of America upon the dome of the Capitol at Washington. A better disposition of this work would be to place it somewhere in the public grounds of the Capitol.

VIRGINIA.—A newspaper paragraph states that a monument is to be erected over the remains of James Monroe, and that Governor Wise has decided upon the design. He has selected from a number of designs that of a "Gothic Temple," prepared by A. Lybrook, Esq., which is to be of cast iron, twelve by seven feet square, and twenty feet to the top of the dome, enriched with Gothic ornaments.

THE works of the late Mrs. Dassel, consisting of fifty-four paintings and drawings, are about to be distributed on Art-union principles, for the benefit of her children. The pictures are on exhibition at her late residence, No. 30 East Twelfth street. A committee of ladies and gentlemen—Mrs. Professor Robinson, Mrs. Charles Dambmann, Mrs. Vincenzo Botta, Rev. Dr. Osgood, and H. T. Tuckerman, Esq.—all of them familiar with the many good deeds performed by this noble woman, have taken an interest in the project; their names present an ample guaranty of the claims which it has upon the public. The price of tickets is \$5, of which there are to be 300 issued. Tickets can be procured of the committee, or of Mr. F. W. Christern, No. 763 Broadway.

To the Editor of the Crayon :

LONDON, 19th Dec. 1858.

THE CRAYON for November last makes mention of a picture by an English artist, Mr. Windus, now in the possession of Mr. Harrison, of Philadelphia, and speaks of it as an illustration of Mrs. Browning's poem, "The Romaunt of the Page." Will you allow me, on behalf of the artist, to explain through the pages of THE CRAYON, that this is a mistake; and a mistake the more worthy of correction, as it has enough plausibility to mislead even those who have seen the picture. The Romaunt of the Page is a story of a new-married bride, who being (under peculiar circumstances) unrecognizable by her bridegroom, follows him, a crusader, in Palestine, in the disguise of a page; and, seeking by indirect questions to discover whether he would approve her conduct, is cast into despair on learning that he would not. The picture is in reality an illustration of the old English ballad "Burd Helen," and known under that title only, which it bore in the Royal Academy Exhibition and the Manchester Art-Treasures Gallery, to the English public. The story of Burd Helen is that of a girl who has been seduced by a young lord, and who, as the time approaches when her shame can no longer be concealed, haunts his steps a whole day long, dressed as a boy. He tries her love and endurance by various cruel tests, such as making her wade through the water, which his horse crosses (the moment represented in the picture); and, after she has proved herself unconquerable by all these he marries her. Of this story the picture will be found an exact and beautiful rendering—both in incident, in expression, and in suggestive accessories; whereas it would only be a loose and inefficient rendering of the Romaunt of the Page.

Your obedient servant,

W. M. ROSSETTI.

STREET-MUSINGS ON ARCHITECTURE.

DECORATIVE PAINTING IN THE HOUSE OF J. A. C. GRAY, Esq.—It does not surprise one to find scoffers denying the doctrine of predestination, and stockbrokers laughing at the powers of the fates. "The fates are against you, Smith. Stuff and nonsense! You ought never to have touched those Eries at 65, nor Reading at 34! If you had stuck to first-mortgage bonds at a reasonable discount, say 38 for six per cents., you would have made a pile instead of losing it." The fates, indeed! you may as well speculate in water-lots, or Atlantic telegraph stock, or Potosi mining shares, as to wait for a fortune from the fates. It will do for artists, poets, and other fancy people of that sort, to talk of the fates, but for good Christians there is nothing like well-indorsed notes at two per cent. a month. We have thought much upon the subject; we have taken "medium" advice, we have philosophized with Plato and Kant; we have rebelled lustily against a prescribed future—laid out for us "cut and dried," as log-rolling politicians poetically express it—and we have revolted against the idea, for we must confess we are sincerely afraid that it is written in the stars, or in the book of fate, or something in the shape of a warrant in the hands of our guardian angel, that we shall never be—rich!

But still, every now and then it comes down upon us as con-vincing as a bank notice, or a tread on a tender toe, or a snow-ball on the bridge of our nose, or an empty pocket, or any other stubborn fact, that it is fore-ordained that we are to meet with innumerable misfortunes, large and small, and of various patterns and color, single and double, or oftener in groups of the most romantic combinations, and all without any fault of ours. We could not have averted it had we known it all beforehand. For instance, the other morning a pleasant dream that all our subscribers had taken it into their heads to pay up before New-year's, subsided, on awaking, into the stern reality that no such thing had taken place, and we resolved to do—what! Indeed

the thing has not yet been discovered what to do with non-paying subscribers. And then we owed our readers a criticism upon some late architectural production; if possible, something we could rejoice over, something creditable, something agreeable, for we have an affectionate desire to please our readers, whether they pay or not, for money is dress after all, and of no consideration whatever, compared to our unquenchable thirst to gratify their love of the beautiful, and reach out the laurel to a successful artist. It had been snowing the whole of the previous day, and we could reasonably expect a clear morning in which to sally forth among the monuments of republicanism, refinement, and rowdyism, rising up like mushrooms amidst sunken lots, filled with belladonna and pigweeds. And we expected a rich harvest from our excursion, and, before all, we wanted our breakfast, for it must be known in this age of facts and statistics, that editors, contrary to popular notions, do not live upon the mere odor of viands and the sight of sparkling wines, but absolutely eat substantial, tangible, and appreciable breakfasts, dinners, and—we are sorry to say—quite often late suppers. However, we concluded quite logically (it will be admitted) to commence operations by rising from our editorial couch. We never do anything by halves, so we jumped out of bed with both legs at once, and put our feet on the carpet—no, not on the carpet, but on say two inches of partly frozen water. The Croton pipe had burst! That morning, dear reader, we dressed standing upon a chair—a most dangerous proceeding, but in our case unavoidable. The same cause which flooded our bedroom refused additional Croton for ablation. The bell summoned Biddy, whom we politely requested to bring us a pitcher of water. She said she would—but it would be a lesson to her. She always made it a point never to engage with a family who had not Croton water in all the rooms, and now she should stipulate that the pipes should be properly secured against frost, so as not to put help, who are as good as other people, to additional trouble! Our toilet completed, we descended to the dining-room to take our frugal breakfast; but here we met with a series of disappointments. The steak was done to a cinder, and the coffee but partly burnt. The milk, however, was burnt entirely, as Biddy suggested, because the range was out of order, and would not boil things properly. The bread had given out the night before, and there was none for breakfast, excepting the article known as baker's bread. The paper, our intellectual breakfast, had not come—it was supposed on account of the weather, for if there was any alteration from yesterday's programme it was this, that instead of pure snow it came down snow and rain, mixed and in abundant quantities. We had one consolation left—our cigar after breakfast. We knew we had a figaro in our overcoat pocket, but, lo and behold! the wrapper was cracked from top to bottom. It was done while helping a heavy lady with a basket into the omnibus, sure enough. We silently vowed we never more would assist heavy ladies, with or without baskets. We sallied forth, but it is needless to say that every step was a disappointment. We slid along on the principle of the Irishman, three steps backwards to every two steps forward, and we concluded that the only way to progress was to walk backwards. We felt rather bitter—no coffee, no steak, no cigar, and no paper! Snow and rain, ice and puddles, a cold east wind, raw and piercing, and before us a tour through the city in search of a clever architectural production. We concluded to walk up to the Worth monument, and vent our wrath upon that.

On the corner of Tenth street and Fifth Avenue our eye was

attracted by a placard on the front door of Mr. Gray's house—"No admittance. Enter at the basement door!" We concluded we would turn in there, and see what was going on. We love to go where admittance is somewhat difficult—besides, we needed shelter for our wearied, hungry, and wet editorial frame, and a secure perch for our editorial limbs. We slid down to the basement, and pulled the bell. Out came a youthful colored person, who informed us that we could not get in, as they were painting the stairs. We replied that we were aware of the fact, and that for this reason we had applied to her to help us over the difficulty, and we assured her that if she would only open the gate, we could manage the rest. This shallow logic appeared satisfactory, and the gate was opened. We at once ascended into the parlor story to see what was going on there. We were well aware that the building was designed by the clever hand of our friend Vaux, but when we entered this time a feeling of Mould (Jacob Wrey) came over us which did not originate with the weather, but with the interior painting. Mould has not in vain served an apprenticeship with Owen Jones; he has caught much of his master's spirit in decoration. Bold as a lion in the selection of his colors, and grave as a judge in their combination, he dazzles with brightness, without offending the most fastidious taste; and as to design, we must pronounce it exquisite. We have seen nothing in the way of painting in this modern Gotham which can compare with the detail of the painting in Mr. Gray's house. Every line and every leaf betrays the spirit and life of a master hand, and reminds us of the best works of the Alhambra and Gartner's modern productions in Munich.

The designs for the ground glass of the windows and bookcase in the library are also evidently drawn by the same hand, with the same success. The centre-piece of the library is a slight mystery to us. In excellence of design and execution it is by no means inferior to the painting; but still there is neither Vaux nor Mould written upon its face. Who did it? The other two centre-pieces are less fortunate in their conception as well as modelling, and we should not wonder if they had been simply bought at a shop. Posterity will certainly not inquire who designed them. The bookcase betrays the genius of Herter—in its style and simplicity it is in his best vein, and in workmanship is not to be surpassed.

But it was not our fate that morning to drink nectar without a pang. Why is that iron safe, in the dining-room, grained in oak, and why those bunches of pears and apples and grapes upon it—a mass almost rude enough for the scenery of a stage? And what is worse, why is all the wood-work (pine) grained in imitation of oak? If real oak was too expensive, it would have been much better to have painted the wood-work in colors. Mould could have done it to perfection, and we hope he will be allowed to do it yet. The decoration of the hall and the underside of the stairs, as perfect in detail as the ceiling of the library, but less happy in the conception of the general design. The hall staircases of our narrow and tall houses are necessarily crowded, and appear contracted in width and unduly expanded in height. The painting here, instead of alleviating this organic difficulty, appears to enhance it.

Upon the whole, however, we were delighted with the painting of Mr. Gray's house, and must not omit to give that gentleman due credit for his good taste and boldness in initiating polychromatic painting, from which most men are apt to shrink. Under the bright skies of our latitude, and surrounded with the bold coloring of our autumnal forests and the bright

masses of our granite rocks, we cannot long resist the absolute necessity of polychromatic painting. It is much to be regretted that so many efforts in that direction have been decided failures, and among the most glaring we must count those of the Capitol at Washington. The effort in Mr. Gray's house is a decided success, and we hope it will prove the initiation of an era in the history of polychromatic decoration in this country.

THE BEARINGS OF ART UPON ELECTIONS.

Dear Crayon:

The late elections suggested to me the propriety of addressing a few words to your readers, not so much for their positive edification, as for the influence they (your readers) may exercise by bringing the matter to the ears of the public, and by enlarging upon the subject in the circle of their immediate acquaintances.

I am, in fact, addressing myself to the masses, and among the masses expressly to our leading politicians more than to you and your select circle of readers, who probably are quite as familiar with what I am going to say as I am myself. To get the ear of the audience upon which I am presuming to obtrude a question of art—to them a bore at any time, and when brought in juxtaposition with elections, I am afraid amounting almost to an insult—I take my cue from a celebrated divine, who commenced a sermon with "D— your eyes!" and proceed as follows:

That this is a great country, a great country indeed, was a thought that struck me while passing by the election booth of my ward the morning of election day. What a spectacle! A free and enlightened people going to the polls to exercise an act of sovereignty—a privilege the most ennobling and elevating that can be enjoyed by an independent and free citizen of this great republic! What a crowd of thoughts and reflections such an act suggests to the mind! Overwhelming indeed! and thus I went musing down to my office, so occupied with the great subject in its various ramifications that I forgot to vote. To trouble you with all or one-half of that which passed through my brain in that long walk would be an unpardonable presumption, and an equally unpardonable infringement upon your valuable space. To give my political reflections and conclusions, would be unbecoming the purpose of your magazine, and I am fearful might disgust the parties I desire to reach. I will therefore confine myself to that portion which has reference to art only.

The first wonderful fact that excited my reflection was the rudeness of all the appointments of the polling place, and of the booths surrounding it. The polls were held in a most unpretending corner-tavern, the usual resort of the laboring classes, and perfectly unadorned, and, not to mince matters, rather dirty. The bar, which, even in such places, is usually got up of decent material, and not unfrequently with an eye to beauty, had been removed to make room for a table, formed of rough plank, laid across a couple of scaffold horses. The walls, had it not been for an impenetrable layer of dirt and tobacco smoke, would be pronounced by most truth-loving persons as perfectly naked. The windows were unwashed, and in some places the broken panes were ingeniously mended with paper. Out of doors, the booths containing the various ticket-brokers, were of the rudest construction, mere unplanned boards, affording scarcely a protection from the weather. The persons occupied in attending to the business of voting, the inspectors, the ticket-holders, and many of the bystanders, were dressed in shabby

habiliments, not too clean, and rather awkwardly adjusted. Their deportment, I fear, might, to say the least of it, be called frivolous; in fact I should be afraid lest a foreigner, unacquainted with the glorious institutions of our country, might rashly pronounce the whole affair uncivilized and barbarous, and like a second Trollope, endeavor to lower us in the estimation of the people of Europe.

My blood is up when I think of such a possibility! Are we to be compared with other nations? Can our institutions and customs be measured by the standard of despotic countries? The Queen of England, when she performs an act of sovereignty like that of addressing the houses of parliament, may need every possible appointment of art and magnificence to uphold a rotten state of monarchical grandeur; she may need it in a benighted country where a queen and her aristocracy are yet regarded with an admiration bordering upon worship; but let me ask hasty foreigners, are we a people who require such things? No, sir! We are free and enlightened citizens, who can vote in a barn if need be, without bringing into play any of the paraphernalia of art. We need no stimulus of outward show to impress upon us the sacredness of a vote! We can go to the polls at early dawn, like the philosophers of ancient Greece, in ragged or mended clothes—dirty, if you please—with our hats jauntily set upon our heads, our sovereign hands in our pockets, or in the holes where pockets used to be, spitting, and chewing, and smoking, reeking with bad rum, and deposit our vote—yes, and what is more, do the thing over again at noon.

Filled with these exalted notions of citizenship, and in a mood to fight the first John Bull who should presume to say a disparaging word of my country, I came to another polling-place, where I saw several citizens standing about, apparently waiting their turn to vote. Says I to myself, we can admire Diogenes who lived in a tub, even if it was a molasses-tub or an oil-tub—and I believe there is every reason to think that it was a second-hand tub of some kind; he must have been much dirtier than those two of my fellow-citizens engaged in a confab on the other side of that booth. They may not be philosophers, but I would bet two to one against any prejudiced, fault-finding John Bull, or frog-eating and oppressed Frenchman or priest-ridden Italian or Spaniard, that they are possibly intelligent fellows, who read a paper every morning over an abundant meal of hot coffee and beefsteak, such as the working classes of no other nation in the world can boast of. And I would bet, moreover, that they are good, sound, patriotic citizens, who have the welfare of their country at heart, and will vote conscientiously. I moved up nearer to overhear their conversation, which I knew would fortify me in my exalted ideas of American democratic republican citizenship. You may imagine my surprise when I heard them converse in a foreign tongue! Thinks I to myself, they speak several languages—probably Latin or Greek—yes, it sounds like Greek. I am no Greek scholar, but I think I can distinguish Greek by the sound. So I addressed myself to a well-dressed gentleman near by (who, by the way, would pass for a nobleman anywhere, but who was nothing more than a dry-goods clerk, as I found out afterwards), and asked him what language those good citizens were conversing in, and whether it was not Greek, as I judged by the sound of it. "Greek! no," said he, "but they are Greeks conversing in Irish." "And do you understand the language of our adopted citizens?" I inquired again—but the answer was drowned in the confusion of voices emanating from a group of six or eight citizens of the same sort, who, emerging from a neighboring

grocery, had joined the two Greeks, and were now conversing in an intelligible Irish brogue.

"Bedad," says one of them, "devil a bit of a vote will I give for fifty cents and a drink, when I know I can get a dollar and two drinks in the afternoon for the asking!" "Indade, Jimmie, you are a greenhorn, and no mistake. It shows you haven't been after leaving ould Ireland more than six month. I vote for fifty cints and a drink in the marning, and git my dollar and two drinks for voting agin in the afternoon, and a shilling extry for swearing it in. I am not going to sell the privilage of a free citizen for a ha'porth, when I know how to make a decent thing out of it. There goes a Dutshman; let us go in and challenge him."

Two Germans who had come up in the meantime indulged in the following conversation:

Green German.—Myn goot sir, I am one democrat, and cannot be overtalked to vote die Republican party. I know die Republican party are die aristocracy, in what do you call 'em—another dress—die wolf in sheep-skin. Die Republican party and die Know-Notings have put themselves to each other to undersquize die Deutsche citizens. Nein, nein; I vote die Democratic ticket for Fernando Wood, der grand socialist.

Cunning old German with spectacles.—You are entirely mistaken, mein dear friend. The Governor Brunninghausen is ein guter Deutscherman in favor of a division of property, which he will carry out as soon as he is made Governor of the Alms-house, when all the poor are to be rich without delay.

Green German.—Dat ish very goot! I vote for Herr Brunninghausen.

By this time, my attention was attracted to furious noises emanating from the polling-place. They had challenged the German, who proved to be a resident of another ward, but insisted that in this free country he could vote where he pleased. As no one would agree with him on that point, he commenced calling them "tamed aristocrats" and "No-Notings," when they hustled him out on the sidewalk, and belabored him most unmercifully. Fearful that I might be innocently involved in his misfortunes, as the *mêlée* had become pretty general, I walked on, sadly disappointed, and looking round all the time to make sure that no foreign critic had observed our disgrace.

After all, I thought to myself, I am afraid I have gone too far in discarding the beneficial influence of art, before demonstrating a basis of reasoning which would enable us to dispense with it. And again, can we ever develop such a basis? It is true, a Jefferson, a Washington, a Webster, and a Clay might be allowed to vote in a tavern as well as in a temple, but how far can we extend the privilege without risk. Bob Sawyer indulged in sausages, cold, *sans fourchette*, in the chamber of the House of Representatives, and after wiping his fingers on the paper, pitched the remnants out of the window. The history of the world shows no record equal to this. A place where improprieties are committed with impunity must be debasing to any mind short of that of an angel. Mind and heart, reason and sentiment, make up the sum total of the motive power of our actions. Some few may be able to rely upon reason alone for guidance in all cases; many—yes, the majority of mankind—can be impressed only through feeling. When I come to reflect upon it, it occurs to me, that if uneducated Irishmen, green from the sod, must have the privilege of voting, a chapel should be erected for the purpose, with an altar, and upon the altar there should be a crucifix and an abundance of lighted tapers, and I should make them kneel between two priests, and say

seven pater nosters and seven ave Marias before they were allowed to deposit their vote.

And what is more, our Yankee voters, with very few exceptions, require, if not the same treatment, at least a similar one. Our polling-places being, as it were, the material symbols of our republican government, should be built expressly for the purpose. They should be truly temples of liberty in their outward appearance, also in their interior appointments. Nothing that architecture, painting, and sculpture could do to give them an air of dignity should be omitted. I would have a spacious ante-chamber, lofty, bold, and impressive, decorated with the best historical paintings, and with statues of the heroes and statesmen of our country, where citizens could be admitted to the presence of the magistrates of the district and other suitable dignitaries, sitting at one end of the room on a platform, decorated with every appointment to make their offices respected. When arraigned before this bar, they should be required to give the necessary evidence of their citizenship, and should receive admonition as to the importance of the act they were about to perform, they should then be finally admitted, one by one, into an inner room, which should be even richer and more imposing and impressive in all its appointments than the ante-chamber, and here their votes should be deposited.

Do you think that under such circumstances, men would dare to walk in with their hats on, expectorate in every direction, raise tumults and riots, or perjure themselves? Would not the very nature of the place, and its impressive appointments, command respect, and arouse every dormant feeling of patriotism, to say nothing of common honesty and decency? Would not the laboring classes and the host of the poor and uneducated, proud of their citizenship, don their best habiliments, and strive to be as decorous in deportment as their more fortunate fellow-citizens? Would they not thoroughly feel that they were about to perform an act that elevates them to a level with the proudest of the land? Would they not prefer it to dragging down the educated and the rich to their own level? Would not such impressions lead to honesty of purpose, to patriotism, and go very far towards making up for the ignorance of the masses? "This is all very nice," I hear the politicians say, "but pomp, splendor, architecture, painting, and sculpture do not agree with the simplicity of our republican institutions, and withal, we have not the means to build such voting-places." Gentlemen, this is all cant and hypocrisy. Do perjury and bloodshed agree with our republican institutions? If so, I am in favor of despotism. "Have not the means!" Supposing that you spent ten millions of dollars in building at once just such voting-places as I propose, would you not be repaid for it in the good government of the city, and in a consequent economy in less than three years? Please count up the amounts spent on election day in bribes, bad rum, broken heads, hire of polling-places, and, after that, add the annual peculations of the officers you elect, the losses, by ignorance, imbecility, and willful neglect in disbursing the money they ostensibly spend for the use of the city. Add to that the amount of crime committed in consequence of a state of society where the posts of honor and trust in the gift of the commonwealth are held by avowed fools and scoundrels, who rise to their position through abuse of sacred privileges, who exist, and prosper, and grow rich there by downright robbery, and spend the balance of your treasure in imbecile and foolish so called improvements. Add to that the *pecuniary loss* (I do not begin to speak of the moral degradation) of a society where such acts and such men are

tolerated, thought well of, praised for their smartness, and you will find it more than abundant to erect polling-places that will outstrip in splendor all the Greek temples and Roman basilicas of antiquity, and all the noble halls of despotism, from the Roman empire down to the present day.

A CITIZEN.

RECEPTIONS.

DODSWORTH'S HALL.—The first Reception of this Association came off on Tuesday evening, January 6th. The company was as numerous as at the Reception of last winter. Quite a number of distinguished persons were present. Over one hundred works of art were displayed upon the walls, consisting of drawings and paintings, the latter being generally of larger size than usual, and more interesting in subject and execution. Among foreign contributions were a "Moonlight," by Jabin; "Fowls," by Couturier; and a Landscape by Lanbinit, and one by Luminait. Of other productions we noticed a "Child and Doll," by Lambdin, and "Chess-players," by Perry, both of Philadelphia; Jackson, of Boston, exhibited a bust of the Rev. Lyman Beecher; and Hinkley, of the same city, a picture of dogs. New York artists of the members contributed as follows: Ehninger, the series of drawings illustrative of Miles Standish; Huntington, an ideal figure subject; Shattuck, Colman, Mignot, James M. Hart, Durand, Williamson, Gignoux, Dana, Suydam, Bellows, Nichols, Hubbard, Wenzler, J. Thompson, Sonntag, and Wotherspoon, each one or more landscape subjects; Tait, Hays, and Watermann several pictures of animals; Greene, "Speranza," an ideal head; Baker, a cabinet head and sketches; Hall, a large fruit-piece, with studies for figure-compositions; Cafferty, a head; Gray, one of his fine cabinet portraits; Pope, an ideal female head; Carter, a battle-scene; Rossiter, a group of children's heads; Loop, a portrait; Blondell, a fancy head; and Pratt, a portrait. Mrs. Greatorex and the two Hills furnished characteristic landscapes. The next Reception will take place on Thursday evening, February 8d.

STUDIO BUILDING, TENTH STREET.—A Reception was held at this fine temple of Art on the evening of the 18th January, attended with complete success. A liberal display of paintings in the well-lighted, handsome exhibition-room, by artists occupying studios in the building, furnished entertainment to a large company, also the studios in which the pictures were painted, most of these being thrown open to the inspection of visitors. The privilege of circulating through the building was much enjoyed; it not only added to the pleasure of the evening, but to the comfort of guests, by preventing the exhibition-room from being too crowded. Among the works exhibited were landscapes by Casilear, Gignoux, Gifford, Hubbard, W. Hart, Mignot, Boughton, Nichols, Heade, Hotchkiss, Suydam, and Thorndike; a full-length life-size portrait of "Henry Clay," by Staunton; a "Roman Girl," by Osgood; "The new Hat," by Edmonds; "Counterfeit Note," by Blauvelt; "Dogs and Game," by Hays, etc.

W. H. ASPINWALL'S GALLERY.—A reception on the 18th ulto. at the residence of W. H. Aspinwall, Esq., who has lately erected a fine gallery adjoining his house, enabled the friends of Art to enjoy the latest and most imposing addition to the art-treasures of this city. Mr. Aspinwall's collection consists mainly of specimens of the old masters. Most conspicuous among these are Murillo's great picture of the Conception (exhibited at Williams and Stevens' last year), and a fine full-length portrait by Van Dyck. Modern European Art is represented by several gems,

among which are a head of Lafayette, by Ary Scheffer, an exquisite "Cattle piece" by Ommegeanck, "Béranger," a domestic scene, by Merle; a small cabinet picture by Fichel, an "Annunciation" by Jalabert, "Death of Wallenstein" by Pilotti, a "Marine" by Gudin, several animal subjects by Brassacat, etc. American Art is represented by a landscape by Church, and heads by Woodville and Huntington. The tasteful and elegant gallery which contains these pictures is the work of Mr. Renwick. One feature of this gallery deserves the attention of amateurs about to erect picture-galleries; it consists of a screen or false ceiling, in area about equal to that of the opening for the skylight above, from which it is suspended a few feet, and so arranged that the pictures on the walls receive the full force of the light, the spectator underneath at the same time being protected from glare. By this arrangement, light becomes mellow, more diffused, and, by contrast with the shadow in which the spectator stands, more powerful where most wanted; its effect reminds one of a sunshiny vista, seen from under trees, or from some spot overshadowed by a passing cloud. The decoration of the gallery is in every respect in keeping with the choice pictures exposed in it. Amateurs, and all who are interested in the civilization of the country, are greatly indebted to Mr. Aspinwall for this noble demonstration of his interest in the cause of Art.

BOSTON.—The first of a series of receptions took place at Mercantile Hall, Summer St., on the evening of the 5th January last. A correspondent says: "It was a decided success in point of attendance, and might have been more brilliant had there been unanimity of ideas in regard to dress, for there was everything of that description present, from the street habit to the toilet of the ball." The Quintette Club occupied the platform and played at intervals. There are seventy subscribers to the series, and they promise to be as popular and useful as they are in this city.—Powers's statue of Webster has arrived, and is to be placed in the vestibule of the new United States court-house, Tremont St.

EXHIBITIONS.

CHICAGO.—A project is on the *tapis* to collect together a number of pieces of statuary, and a hundred or more good paintings, in both of which our city is richer than is generally known, and to exhibit the same in some suitable hall for thirty or sixty days for the benefit of the poor. We earnestly hope that it may be done, as it would not only relieve the suffering, but would afford thousands an opportunity of improving their taste for, and knowledge of Art, by the examination of meritorious pictures and statues.—*Church Record.*

TROY.—An exhibition is under way for this town. Artists are invited to contribute. L. R. Menger & Co. are agents for New York.

MR. F. RICHARDT, a prominent Danish artist, has opened in the National Academy rooms an exhibition of paintings executed by himself, and almost wholly devoted to American scenery. The views embrace several scenes in the Mammoth Cave, with views on the St. Lawrence, Hudson, and Ohio Rivers, architectural views in New York, a bathing-scene at Cape May; etc., all of which are drawn with great fidelity. Added to these are a number of views in Denmark, with a series of pencil-drawings. It is Mr. Richardt's intention to engrave and publish the entire collection in Denmark.

GRENOUX's "Niagara by Moonlight" is on exhibition at Goupil & Co's gallery for the benefit of a charitable institution,

it having been generously loaned for that purpose by Mr Belmont, to whom the picture belongs.

Studies among the Leaves.

THE following extract on Upholstery, by Brownlee Brown, we take from the *Independent*:

A wall should, of course, be a surface and background for objects, not a prominent object in itself. So a carpet is the field on which figures and furniture are to stand in relief. Moreover, the six planes of inclosure which make a room should shut us in as lightly and loosely as possible, affording the utmost sense of space and freedom; but a positive wall or ceiling, covered with figures in relief, from which there is no escape for the eye or the mind, is like a weight on the chest, and reminds one uncomfortably of "Box Brown," the black fugitive, who came all the way from Alabama in a dry-goods case.

For a small room, we must have a light, evasive, airy figure, to give breathing-space, something which we seem to look through, not at, as we look through the sky. Too much wall will certainly kill your room, and reduce every visitor to the state of mind in which Yankee Doodle must have found himself, when

"He couldn't see the town,
There were so many houses."

The decoration of every apartment should be to the forms and colors that people it, like an accompaniment to the air in music; yet our carpets, with their staring, ill-assorted, unmitigated splendors, salute the guests with a flourish of drums and trumpets, to which in a sober suit he must play second fiddle, or be drowned out of notice altogether.

Colors and forms in carpeting or paper must be coarse and imperfect; they will not bear inspection. Hence the necessity of keeping them subordinated to escape direct attention. The best decoration is therefore an arabesque, which does not imitate any specific vegetable form to provoke criticism, but only remotely suggests the curves and angles of vegetation, and the lights and shadows among branches and leaves. Your wall and floor are mere surfaces to be enriched. By cloth and paper you will give them texture, and remove the baldness and vacancy of a uniform surface. So Nature enriches the trunks of trees, the surfaces of leaves and rocks—varying the face of water by ripple, of cloud by shadow, and of sky by cloud; never leaving a blank or any extent unvaried, never polishing away the tooth-marks of her constructive chisel, but writing on every object the cheerful history of its production and growth.

Nature has given us her idea of a carpet in the grass. She spreads a broad surface with perfect unity in the general effect, so that every child knows it is green, and thinks it all green, while every inch of surface is varied by an intricate and delicate checker-work of light and shadow; and the entire pattern is again shaded by distance and variegated by patches of clover and plantain, yarrow and dock-weed, by a thousand vines and brambles, by the brightness of flowers and tinted leaves—all subdued and blended with the original green.

In the carpet stores we see symptoms of relenting on the part of our persecutors—the men of design. Having exhausted every degree of extravagance in their monstrous flower-painting, any change must be an improvement and return towards simplicity. We saw very noble carpets in our ruling color modestly yet cheerfully varied, but the oil-cloths are still painted by madmen bent upon driving us all distracted, and bringing the whole world over to their side.

In discussing the merits of a wall paper, we touch the cardinal principle of all ornamentation. It must be strictly subordinated, or it becomes an offence, the worse kind of ugliness, pretension offering itself for beauty. Every object is most beautiful when its form, material, and color show distinctly its use and seems thoroughly appropriated to that use; when they help it to look more emphatically like what it is, not like what it is not; when, in short, they express most